

only fools fall by Val-Creative

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Summary: After the divorce with Myra, Eddie Kaspbrak stays with Richie Tozier while he's getting back on his feet. They're never bored. (IT 2019. Post-Canon. Reddie.)

only fools fall

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At first, Richie doesn't know what the ruckus is. A loud, insistent clattering. Dark shadows under Richie's bedroom door.

He lets out a tired grunt, picking up his new square-lens eyeglasses and slipping them on. Richie's cell flashes on to 8:15am. Jesus fuckin' christ. That's way too *goddamn* early in the morning to be conscious. Minus prepping for daytime interviews.

Richie crawls out of his threadbare quilt, yawning and rubbing down on the side of his jaw. For a second, he thinks the insides of his teeth taste like old, sour vodka. Richie's tongue grazes idly over his molars. His feet hop down on the cool hardwood and Richie's shaggy, plum-colored rug, as he sleep-zombie shuffles himself from his bedroom into the apartment-corridor.

"Good morning," Eddie says, panting and rushing by. He's wearing cheap safety goggles. Two sets of elbow-length rubber gloves. Eddie's right hand clutches a mop, and his other hand gripping onto a bottle of what suspiciously smells like bleach.

"Morning..." Richie murmurs, scrunching his eyes and wandering after him, "... the fuck are you doing... ..?"

"Cleaning up this shithole, dude." Eddie gestures out to Richie's sitting area. By the looks of it, he already threw out Richie's garbage and takeout boxes. Richie narrowly avoids walking into a tall bucket of dirty, soapy water, cursing quietly. "You wanna get roaches? I already found *two* dead spiders. And your kitchen window has *mold*. If I was your landlord, I would kill you."

Richie yawns again as a response, this time against his knuckles.

"*Awesome...*" he murmurs again, listless, smacking his lips. Richie's fingers bunch instinctively at his armpit through his **FOO FIGHTERS**

concert tee. His boxer-briefs rumbled up Richie's asscrack and his thighs now exposed, coarse with black hairs.

Little does he know that Eddie's gaze pins on him, fascinated, before tearing itself away.

Richie sniffs, once, twice, lifting his head and eerily resembling a hound dog.

"Coffee...?" Richie blurts out.

A nod.

"Coffee," Eddie says in agreement. He puts away the spray-bottle in his left hand under the sink and nudges a mug over the kitchen island's countertop. The other mug already drained of its contents, properly rinsed out.

Richie's expression brightens.

"*COFFEE!*" he roars out triumphantly, leaving Eddie to huff out a laugh.

It's been like this for a month now—Richie's been a good enough friend to look after him. It's been absolutely *insane*. He saved Eddie from the fucking sewer clown before it could skewer Eddie alive. He got Eddie a plane ticket and allowed him to crash at Richie's spacious but unbearably messy apartment while Eddie works temporarily on a graveyard shift of the local convenience store.

Myra swore that if Eddie left with his suitcases to Derry that she wouldn't be home when Eddie got back.

Eddie did come back, but she wasn't there. It took another week of yelling matches with Richie to convince Eddie to abandon the compulsion of leaving her pathetically long and apologetic text messages. Divorce came quickly, with a stone-faced Myra taking half of what was Eddie's. He's not poor, but Richie doesn't want Eddie living alone. Not after everything. Not after what happened to Stanley.

Richie spits out the coffee noisily, back into the rainbow-striped mug,

startling Eddie out of his musing.

"*UUGH!* Why's it taste like that?!"

"I put some apple cider vinegar in it. There was a discount."

"Don't fuck with my caffeine boost, man," Richie says, complaining, brows furrowing. He stares down at his coffee, while Eddie returns to one of the backrooms to finish cleaning, sniffing and then drinking another mouthful tentatively. "*Mm... s'good...*"

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They go about their own business for the rest of the afternoon.

Richie finishes up his stand-up comedy rehearsal with the light technicians, approving everything so far. He picks up a six-pack as soon as the liquor store opens, ignoring a call from his agent, taking an Uber and expecting to walk into the apartment with Eddie napping. It's Eddie's day off. He's been living on Richie's sofa. With the irregular hours, he sees Eddie conked out a lot.

He peers in, whistling and glimpsing Eddie hovering near the stove-top. That's not an apron Richie thinks he owns.

"It reeks in here—did you let one loose?" Richie proclaims, dropping the beer and nearly colliding into Eddie's newly chopped salad. A real salad. Tomatoes and onions and shredded carrots and freshly boiled egg. The whole fucking nine yards.

"Uhhh, no?" Eddie says, and then looks over his shoulder, glowering when a farting noise escapes Richie.

"Oh wait," Richie says, grinning toothily. "That one's on me."

"You're like a seven-year-old, Rich."

"What'cha cookin'?" Richie joins him, and Eddie fights back a wince for a moment. Holy shit, that fart was gnarly. "Pasta? Macaroni? Spaghetti?" A delighted '*aha!*' flies past Richie's lips breathily.

"Eddie..." he waves a hand to Eddie purposely saying nothing while stirring their dinner, turning down the heat, and then Richie waves proudly to the cooking pot. "Spaghetti..."

The dumb nickname curls up Eddie's mouth.

"Set the table, will you?"

"With what?"

"Paper plates, dipshit. They're with the napkins."

"Oh." Richie turns to the cramped, wooden dining table, shrugging.
"Aye, aye, captain."

"Cou—" Eddie's brown eyes widen. He stiffens up as Richie's open palm claps affectionately to one of Eddie's buttocks, though not hard enough to sting, "—COULD YOU NOT *SMACK MY ASS!*" he bellows, flushing. "*I'M TOUCHING HOT FOOD HERE!*"

"Sorry 'bout that!" Richie's voice answers gleefully. "It was right there!"

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Eddie finally seats himself, leaving out the bowl of salad on the kitchen countertop. He picks out the red onions from his greens unthinkingly, stirring the bolognese red sauce on his plate. "Ah, Spaghetti Man has arrived," Richie trills out.

As he's removing his eye-glasses to wipe them, Eddie gazes up, studying Richie's face. The age-lines and facial hair.

"It's weird," he remarks. "You look different without the glasses..."

Richie beams, fluttering his eyelashes in Eddie's direction. "More handsome?"

"Older."

"Yeesh," he mutters, frowning and slipping back on his eye-glasses. "Way to kill the romantic vibe, Eds."

Eddie disregards the quip, chuckling. "You looked older when we were kids without your glasses," he explains, twirling some red sauce and spaghetti strands to his fork, biting carefully into them. "Not like some prepubescent turdstain you actually were."

"Well, I'm blind as shit without 'em."

"What about contacts?"

Richie shudders. "I'm not touching my eyeball, dude."

"You still got a thing about eyeballs?" Eddie questions, not bothering to hide his astonishment.

The other man slaps down a hand on the table, rattling it. "*No shit, I still got a thing about eyeballs*," Richie mimics him, exaggerating Eddie's voice into a higher-pitched croak. He switches back to his own tone, exasperated. "You still got a thing about crickets. Can we not talk about fucking eyeballs over dinner?" Richie asks, jabbing his spaghetti plate harshly.

Not wanting a fight this time, Eddie decides to keep eating. He chooses water over Richie's beer, sipping slowly between bites. Could have used less oil, Eddie tells himself. The sauce could have used more garlic and basil.

Richie hasn't concentrated on anything else but Eddie, chewing loudly.

"Where'd you get the hickey?"

"It's a rash," Eddie corrects him, not looking up.

"You sure?"

"I think I would know."

A pause.

"You want one?" Richie offers, tapping the fork-prongs against his lips. He's not smirking or appearing coy at all. Well, a little coy. That's just Richie. "No, really," he says, countering Eddie's glance of 'fuck you'. "I'm actually very good at... hickey-making. Ninety nine point nine percent success rate." Richie wiggles up his eyebrows, gulping down the rest of his beer. "Just saying."

Eddie snorts. "What's the point one percent?"

"Hmm..." A deep, reverberating hum leaves Richie's throat. It's all around Eddie, permeating his senses, warming the surface of his skin. Eddie sternly clenches his fingers at nothing, taking a deep breath. "Wouldn't you like to know, Spagheds..."

Once he's gathered his wits, Eddie lowers his head, shaking it.

"Clear your plate."

Richie pushes out his dining-chair, burping into his fist, expression unreadable.

But as he walks by with his soggy paper plate, Richie's fingers squeeze a little on Eddie's upper arm. A gust of air blowing against Eddie's temple. "Love it when you get bossy..." Richie murmurs heatedly, all smiles and teasing nature again. He squeezes down again, letting go.

The same pulse of heat twitches Eddie's dick.

Eddie groans internally, running his hands over his sauce-smearred lips.

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It (2019) isn't mine. Requested by sporklift (AO3): "Eddie stays with Richie while he's getting back on his feet after his divorce from Myra." I'M STILL RIDING ON THE HIGH OF CANON GAY RICHIE AND CANON REDDIE. Tell me if you liked this! How are we doing out there, Reddies? We won,, but at what cost,,,,,,,,,

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